

Claims:

1–49. (Cancelled)

50. (Previously Presented) A method of processing segments of a continuous flexible web wherein a stretch of the web is incrementally advanced under tension to successively feed at least one segment of the web to a web processing station having processing components, said method comprising:

intermittently releasing tension on the stretch of the web while said at least one segment thereof is at the processing station;

holding each successive segment of the stretch of the web while the segment is positioned at the web processing station;

continuing to hold the held segment of web at the processing station while allowing the held segment to move relative to adjacent portions of the web, said held segment being moveable in an X axis direction of feed of the stretch of the web to the processing station, in a Y axis direction transverse of the X direction of feed of said stretch of the web, and about a θ axis of rotation of the holder perpendicular to said X and Y axis directions;

accurately adjusting the position of the held segment of the web at said processing station prior to processing thereof by subjecting the held segment to controlled adjustment motion selected from the group consisting of motion along said X axis, motion along said Y axis, rotation about said θ axis, and simultaneous combinations of such motions as required to obtain accurate alignment of the segment of the web with the processing components at said processing station; and

processing each segment within the station after said accurate adjustment thereof.

51. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 50, wherein the processing components include die cutting elements, and wherein said processing step includes subjecting the held segment of the web at said processing station to die cutting after adjustment of the position of the held segment of the web aligned with the die cutting elements.

52. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 50, further comprising: ~~wherein~~
~~is included the steps of~~
providing a shiftable vacuum plate positioned to hold said held ~~the~~ segment of the web at the web processing station; ~~station;~~
sequentially applying vacuum to the plate to successively hold said held segment of the web; ~~web;~~ and
adjusting the position of the plate while holding said held segment of the web to effect said accurate adjustment of ~~the~~ said held segment at said processing station.

53. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 50, wherein said accurately adjusting the position of the held segment of the web at said processing station ~~said adjusting step including~~ includes ~~the step of~~ comparing the location ~~locations~~ of a fixed reference indicium within said station with the location of an indicium carried by ~~each of~~ said held segment ~~segments~~.

54. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 50, further comprising: ~~wherein~~
~~is included the steps of~~

feeding the stretch of the web in said X direction while maintaining tension on said
stretch; ~~stretch~~; and

relaxing the tension on said stretch while ~~the~~ said held segment of the web is held
at said processing station and during accurate adjustment of the position of the held
segment ~~of the web with respect to the~~ at said processing station.